



**Civil Service
Commissioners**
for Northern Ireland

Choosing new staff in a fair way



**Easy
Read**

Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



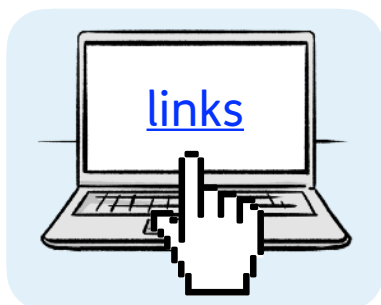
This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it. You can also read the full document for more information.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

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About this booklet



This information is from the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland.



This booklet is about the **Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS)**. They help the government to do its work.



We help to make sure that they are fair when they choose new **civil servants**.



Civil servants are people who work in the civil service.



This booklet explains our rules to make sure that the civil service is fair when it chooses new staff.

The Merit Principle



The **Merit Principle** says that someone should only get a job in the civil service if they are the best person to do that job.



This is known as getting the job 'on merit'.

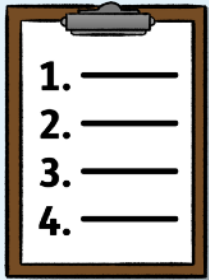


We make sure that the civil service gives jobs to people on merit.



This information explains how civil servants can make sure they give people jobs on merit.

Principles



There are 4 ideas, called **principles**, that we think civil servants should think about when they find new staff:



On merit

1. New staff should get their job on merit

It is very important that staff get their jobs on merit.



This helps to make sure that the civil service does not take sides when it helps the public.



Everyone should have a fair chance to apply for a job in the civil service.



It is important that no groups in Northern Ireland are unfairly left out of the civil service.



2. The civil service should work in ways that make sure it is fair

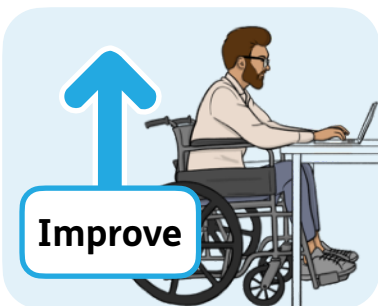
Civil servants should check that the ways that they work, called **practices**, are fair. This includes the ways they:



- Write the advert for the job.



- Decide who is best for the job.



Doing this in a fair way will help the civil service to improve, because they will get the best people for the job.



It is good when staff work on ideas to improve their practices.



3. Everyone should be treated fairly when they apply for a job

People who apply for a job with the civil service must be treated fairly.



Civil servants should work hard to make sure they do not treat some people unfairly.



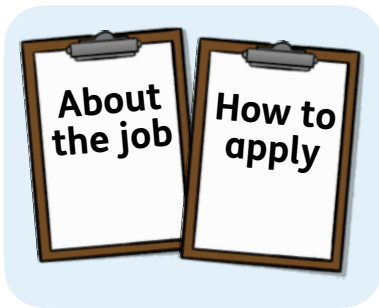
They should be able to show that they have been fair to everyone.



4. Civil servants should be open and honest about how they choose people

Everyone should get a fair chance to apply for a job.

Civil servants should give people all the information they need, including:



- Information about the job and how to apply.



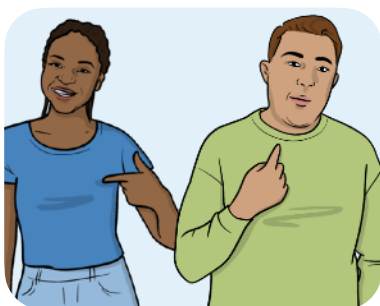
- Why they chose whether or not to give them the job.

What civil servants must do



This part of the booklet explains what civil servants must do when they find new staff.

Getting people to apply



It is important that everyone gets a fair chance to apply for a job in the civil service.



We will check to see if civil servants have rules to make sure that they do not leave any groups out.



They should especially help people from groups who have been left out in the past, like disabled people.

We will also check to see if civil servants have:



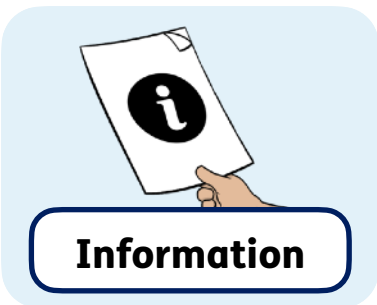
- Thought about what might stop some groups from applying.



- Made sure that everyone can see and understand the job advert.



- Been open and honest with people about the jobs that they can apply for.



- Given people information about the job, to help them to apply.



- Checked whether people have not had a fair chance to apply for the job.

Choosing people



It is important that civil servants think about how to be fair when they choose someone for a job.

We will check to see if civil servants have:



- Thought about everyone and not left anyone out.



- Clearly described what the job is.



- Been clear about how they will choose who is best for the job.

We will also check to see if civil servants have:



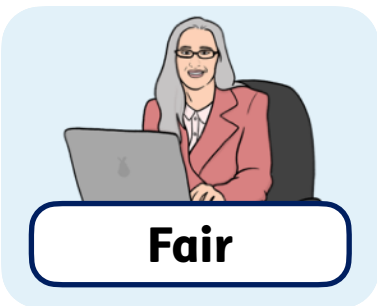
- Made sure that the **selection panel** are experts and do not all have the same background.



The **selection panel** is the group of people who choose which person will get a job.



- Kept notes about the choices they made.



- Worked in ways that are fair.



- Have not taken too long to choose someone.

We will also check to see if civil servants have:



- Given people jobs on merit.



- Been clear how long the job will last for.



- Given extra help to people who need it.

Training



Civil servants should get training to make sure they choose new people in a fair way.

Training should:



- Teach civil servants about how to pick the right person for a job.



- Be given to everyone who helps to pick the right person for a job.



- Be up to date and right for the jobs that people do.



- Be checked by the civil service to see if it is helping people do their job well.

Talking to each other



For civil servants to find the right person for a job, they need to be good at talking to each other.

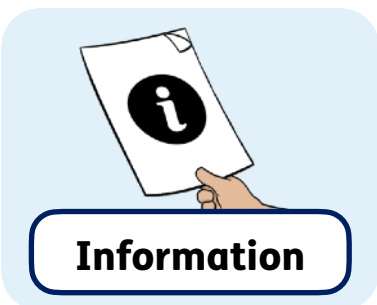
This means:



- They should get help from people who know a lot about the rules about giving people jobs.



- Everyone knows what they need to do when they are choosing the right person for a job.



- They should give clear information to the people who want the job.



- People should be able to speak up if something is not right.



Quickly

Civil servants should answer questions and fix problems quickly.

Following the rules



When civil servants choose a new member of staff, they need to check they are following the rules.

We will check to see if they have:



On merit

- Followed the Merit Principle.



- Checked they are doing things the right way.



- Made sure that the selection panel understands what they should do.

We will also check to see if civil servants have:



- Written down if someone on the selection panel knows the person who wants the job.



- Kept checking if the rules are helping people.



- Learned from each time they pick someone for a job.



- Tried to get better at picking the right people for jobs.



- Keeping safe all the information about what they did.

When we do not use the Merit Principle

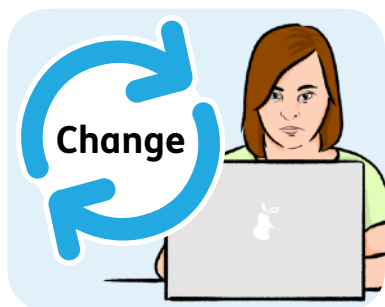
Sometimes, we can pick a person for a job in a different way. This can happen if:



- The person is coming from another job for a short time.



- The person already works for the civil service in another part of the UK.



- The job that someone already does is becoming a part of government work.



- The person has certain skills that we need.

We might also choose people for jobs in a different way if:



- The person is part of a special project, like a project to help disabled people to work in the civil service.



- The person worked in politics and is now coming back.



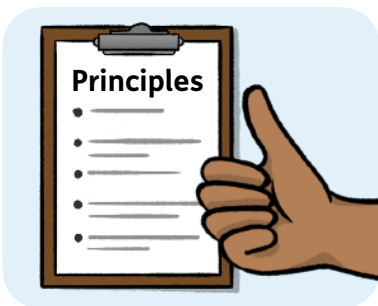
If someone starts a job in one of these ways, civil servants must write down why it happened.

How we check the civil service is following the rules



We check that different parts of the civil service follow the rules when they choose new staff.

We call this **audit and review**.



We make sure that civil servants stick to our principles.



We write a report every year explaining what we have found out.

When we do audits and reviews, we check:



- Civil servants used the right practices when they picked people for jobs.



- Staff checked that people were being chosen for jobs in the right way.



- Who got the job, and how many people tried to get the job.



- What staff did to get different groups of people to apply for jobs, and whether it worked.



- Any other facts about how people were picked for jobs.

Find out more



You can look at our website here:
www.nicscommissioners.org

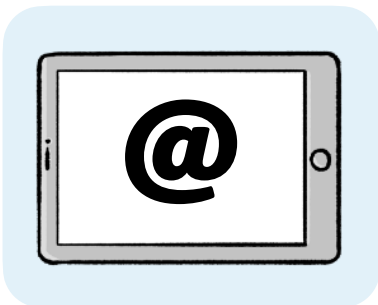
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